Implementation of water management schemes

†298. DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI:
SHRI RAJ MOHINDER SINGH MAJITHA:

Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that two-third of land in the country is dependent upon rain for irrigation, if so, the details thereof;

(b) whether it is also a fact that due to involvement of various Ministries in implementation of the ongoing water management development schemes of Government their implementation has not been satisfactory, if so, the details in this regard; and

(c) whether a proposal for setting up a national level authority for land cultivation dependent upon rains, is under consideration of Government, if so, the outlines of the proposals?

THE MINISTER OF WATER RESOURCES (PROF. SAIF-UD-DIN SOZ): (a) As per the latest assessment, the net sown area in the country is 132.8 million hectare and the net irrigated area is 53.07 million hectare. Thus, about 60% of the net sown area is unirrigated.

(b) In the Report of the Mid Term Appraisal of Tenth-Five Year Plan, it has been stated that there are too many agencies of the Central and State Governments implementing watershed schemes and this makes a coordinated approach towards prioritised planning and implementation rather difficult. The Tenth Plan document of Planning Commission has also brought out the fact of multiplicities of Ministries/Departments dealing with various aspects of water.

(c) Establishment of a national level Authority for Rainfed Areas was announced by the Prime Minister of India in his address to the Nation on 15th August, 2005. In this connection, the Planning Commission has conducted a brain storming session under the Chairmanship of Dr. M.S. Swaminathan, Chairman, National Commission on Farmers on 15.2.2006.

Baglihar Hydroelectric Project

299. SHRI KALRAJ MISHRA: Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(a) whether a World Bank neutral expert accompanied by Indian and Pakistani officials recently visited the Baglihar hydroelectric project site for inspection; and

(b) if so, how far the dispute have come nearer to resolution of the issues thereby, indicating the precise dispute and how it is sought to be resolved?

THE MINISTER OF WATER RESOURCES (PROF. SAIF-UD-DIN SOZ): (a) Yes, Sir. Prof. Raymond Lafitte, the Neutral Expert appointed to examine the matters relating to Baglihar Project had visited the Project accompanied by Indian and Pakistani officials on October 2-3, 2005.

(b) The Government of Pakistan are of the view that certain features of the Dam such as the location of power intake, the location of the gated spillways, the size of the pondage, the calculated maximum probable flow are not in conformity with design parameters as laid down in the Indus Water Treaty, 1960. The Government of Pakistan filed its Memorial on the case and the Government of India has filed its Counter Memorial before the Neutral Expert. The respective parties had been given an opportunity to make a site inspection. The Expert required India to furnish additional technical reports, which have been filed. Thereafter the Government of Pakistan had filed its Reply on the points raised and India is to file its Rejoinder as per the time schedule prescribed by the Neutral Expert. Thereafter, the two parties will be given an opportunity to make oral presentations in the matter. Thereafter, the Neutral Expert will come to his determination on matters referred to him. This determination by the Neutral Expert will be made on the basis of his technical assessment of the Dam's design proposed by India in relation to the provisions of the Treaty.

Depletion of ground water level in Uttaranchal

300. SHRI HARISH RAWAT: Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether some areas of Uttaranchal have been facing acute dry spells this year and preceding three years with a result that ground water level have depleted a lot;

(b) whether Central Government has given necessary financial aid to the State Government in this regard; and